

COMMISSION ACTION

NCPC File No. 6132



PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE SECURITY AND LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

FINAL SITE AND BUILDING PLANS

Pennsylvania Avenue between 15TH and 17TH Streets, NW, and
Jackson and Madison Places, NW
Washington, DC

Submission by the Federal Highway Administration

September 4, 2003

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of final site and building plans pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §8722(d) and Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)).

Commission Action

The Commission:

- Approves the final site and building plans (security and landscape design) for Pennsylvania Avenue at the White House (between 15th and 17th Streets, NW, including Jackson and Madison Places), Washington, DC, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 1.31(38.00)41218, except for the granite type proposed for the gutter along the southern curb line of Pennsylvania Avenue, the aggregate color mix and binder for the asphaltic pavement, and the pavement type to be used in the expanded sidewalks on Jackson and Madison Places.
- Requires that the following materials be for review and approval prior to construction:
 - A sample of the granite type that will define the curb's edge of the southern gutter along the Avenue.
 - A sample of the aggregate pavement to be used on the center portion of the Avenue and on Jackson and Madison Places.

- A sample of the pavement to be used on the expanded sidewalks on Jackson and Madison Places.

Deborah B. Young
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

E. Miller

REVISED (9/3/03)

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Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets, NW, and
Jackson and Madison Places, NW,
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Submission by the Federal Highway Administration

August 28, 2003

Abstract

The proposed design will replace the temporary security components on Pennsylvania Avenue and on Jackson and Madison Places (erected in 1995 after the Oklahoma City bombing); and it will improve the quality of President's Park. The beauty, civic design and visual quality of this special place in the Nation's Capital will be improved with the design and construction of well-designed security booths and bollards, street tree planting, paving materials, and street furniture, such as benches and lighting. This effort, managed by the Federal Highway Administration, has resulted in a design that successfully addresses the operational requirements of the various users of the Avenue and Lafayette Square, and several key criteria, including satisfying existing security requirements; reflecting a clear memory of the Avenue's historic use; accommodating the Downtown Circulator and staging of the Inaugural Parade; and allowing for the future reopening of the street to vehicular traffic.

In June 2003, the National Capital Planning Commission approved the preliminary site and building plans for Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, which called for landscape and security improvements to this important place. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) completed the Environmental Assessment (EA) in April 2003, and issued a Finding of No Significant Impact on May 29, 2003. NCPC staff analyzed the EA, in conformance with the requirements of NEPA, and concluded that the analysis was sufficient and demonstrated no significant environmental impacts, and issued a Finding of No Significant Impact on May 30, 2003.

On July 24, 2003, the FHWA held a consultation meeting in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for adjacent property owners, stakeholders, and the public to comment on the design proposal

and the draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The final MOA was signed on September 3, 2003. This document includes the terms of the conclusion of the Section 106 consultation. The Section 106 review period will continue through September 2003 to allow the FHWA to consider any additional issues identified at the September 4 Commission meeting, and any subsequent relevant written comments from interested parties.

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of the final site and building plans pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §8722(d) and Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. §8722(b)(1)).

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

- **Approves** the final site and building plans (security and landscape design) for Pennsylvania Avenue at the White House (between 15th and 17th Streets, NW, including Jackson and Madison Places), Washington DC, as shown on NCPC Map File No.1.31(38.00)41218, except for the granite type proposed for the gutter along the southern curb line of Pennsylvania Avenue, the aggregate color mix and binder for the asphaltic pavement, and the pavement type to be used in the expanded sidewalks on Jackson and Madison Places.
- **Requires that** the following materials be submitted for review and approval prior to construction.
 - A sample of the granite type that will define the curb's edge of the southern gutter along the Avenue;
 - A sample of the aggregate pavement to be used on the center portion of the Avenue and on Jackson and Madison Places.
 - A sample of the pavement to be used on the expanded sidewalks on Jackson and Madison Places.

* * *

BACKGROUND AND STAFF EVALUATION

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Project Location

The proposed project is located in President's Park on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, between 15th and 17th Streets, NW, and includes both Jackson and Madison Places, adjacent to Lafayette Park. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figure 1*) The project area encompasses:

Pennsylvania Avenue: the entire length of the Avenue, including the north and south sidewalks.

Madison Place: the east sidewalk, but not the west sidewalk except for those areas necessary to connect with the existing bollard line in Lafayette Park.

Jackson Place: the west sidewalk, but not the east sidewalk except for those areas necessary to connect with the existing bollard line in Lafayette Park.

Background Summary

In May 1995, Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House was closed to public vehicular traffic. A White House security review concluded that no alternatives existed to ensure the protection of the President and others in the White House from explosive devices, except by restricting vehicular traffic on the Avenue. On November 1 2001, after lengthy study and consideration, the National Capital Planning Commission adopted a report, based on legitimate security concerns, recommending that Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House remain closed to normal city traffic at this time. If in the future, there are major positive changes in the security environment and/or risk detection technology is improved to the satisfaction of the relevant government agencies, this recommendation will be reconsidered by the National Capital Planning Commission.

Recognizing that the present condition of the street and its crudely barricaded security checkpoints are unacceptable, the report recommended the immediate design and construction of a landscaped civic space along the Pennsylvania Avenue right-of-way in front of the White House to create a distinguished, pedestrian-oriented space appropriate for the Nation's Capital. The recommendation also included the following general design and programmatic criteria:

- Respect and enhance the historic setting and views of the White House.
- Reflect a clear memory of Pennsylvania Avenue's historic use.
- Accommodate the staging of the Inaugural Parade.
- Accommodate the Downtown Circulator.
- Allow for the future reopening of the street to vehicular traffic.

- Allow for the possible future construction of a tunnel.

Existing Conditions

(Refer to Attachment I, Figure 2)

Pennsylvania Avenue, between 15th and 17th Streets, and Jackson and Madison Places have been limited to pedestrians, bicyclists, and authorized vehicles since interim security measures were installed in 1995. These measures include large concrete planters (located on the street and across the sidewalks), security booths, and hydraulic plate barriers. The current condition restricts views and pedestrian movement, and mars the beauty and dignity of this important place in the Nation's Capital. In 1999, decorative bollards were installed as a security measure in the northern portion of Lafayette Park, and across Jackson and Madison Places to improve both security and aesthetic conditions.

The United States Secret Service (USSS) manages the entry portals to this precinct. Currently, the entry portals on Pennsylvania Avenue at 15th and 17th Streets serve as the primary security checkpoints, and the entry portals from H Street at Jackson and Madison Places serve as the secondary security checkpoints.

Pennsylvania Avenue is an 84-foot-wide asphalt roadway with a 33-foot-wide concrete sidewalk along the south side of the Avenue (White House side). On the north side of the Avenue, a 16-foot wide concrete sidewalk is located in front of the Riggs Bank and Bank of America; an 18-foot wide brick sidewalk is located in front of the Renwick Gallery and Blair House; and a 21-foot wide brick sidewalk is located along Lafayette Park. Jackson and Madison Places are 40-foot wide roadways with residential-scale brick sidewalks on each side. The width of these walks ranges between 17 and 19 feet. Jackson Place currently accommodates 40 angled parking spaces adjacent to the park.

A single row of street trees lines each curb, except for the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House between East and West Executive Drives. A row of Elm trees once lined the sidewalk in front of the White house, but these trees succumbed to Dutch Elm Disease in the mid-twentieth century. Large concrete bollards replaced the former tree row in 1988. Overall, the existing trees along the Avenue vary in age and size and, in places, are unevenly spaced.

Different styles of cast iron light poles are installed along the sidewalks on Pennsylvania Avenue and along Lafayette Park, and some are used to post street and way-finding signage. Benches are located on the sidewalks in Lafayette Park, and there are several benches and way-finding kiosks at the entry portals at 15th and 17th Streets.

Although title rests with the United States, Pennsylvania Avenue, between 15th and 17th Streets, is under the administrative jurisdiction of the District of Columbia. Jackson and Madison Places, and H Street are also under the administrative jurisdiction of the District of Columbia. Lafayette Park, including the sidewalks that surround it, the White House grounds and the sidewalk in front of the White House are under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. The sidewalks on both sides of the street on either end of Pennsylvania Avenue, and those across from

Lafayette Park on Jackson and Madison Places are the maintenance responsibility of either the Treasury Department, State Department, or General Services Administration.

Project Description

The final site and building plans address security components, landscape treatment and site furnishings, and pedestrian and vehicular circulation. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figure 3*)

Security Components

With limited exceptions, vehicular access to this secure area will be accommodated at the Jackson and Madison Places checkpoints. The checkpoints on Pennsylvania Avenue will be limited to prescreened or cleared motorcades, emergency vehicles, and the Downtown Circulator. Security booths and a “sally port” (a secure area formed by two lines of bollards) are proposed to secure each of these four entry points. The “sally port” improves security and prevents tailgating vehicles to gain access.

The security booths will be positioned to allow vehicles to approach the booth on the driver’s side. On Pennsylvania Avenue, removable bollards will be used in locations where there will be an infrequent need to remove the barrier; they will be placed in the street to allow for the Inaugural Parade and in the sidewalks to allow for passage of maintenance equipment. Fixed bollards will be used in sidewalks on Jackson and Madison Places. Retractable bollards will be used on Pennsylvania Avenue, Jackson Place, and Madison Place where frequent passage is required.

- **Jackson and Madison Places**
(*Refer to Attachment I, Figures 4 and 5*)

The proposed security improvements at Jackson and Madison Places include creation of a “sally port,” removal of street bollards, and relocation and replacement of the security booths. The location of the security booth and security line on Madison Place will remain within 5 feet of its present location. The security line and the security booth on Jackson Place will be relocated approximately 40 feet north. In both cases, these barrier lines will consist of a combination of fixed and retractable bollards, the first barrier line will be placed at least 100 feet south of the intersection of H Street, with a second bollard line installed 44 feet to 48 feet south to create the “sally ports.” Vehicles will be inspected and cleared outside of the first bollard line prior to entering into the “sally port.”

Although two-way access is provided along Jackson and Madison Places, the sidewalks on each side of the sally port will be extended along its length, providing a 12-foot access way to channel vehicles as they enter or exit the secure area. The existing temporary security booths installed in 1999 will be replaced with newly designed booths that will be located inside the new bollard line. The security booth on Jackson Place will be located just south of the Van Steuben Statue plaza area, and on Madison Place, just south of, and across the street from, the Kosciuszko Statue plaza area.

- Pennsylvania Avenue at 15th and 17th Streets
(Refer to Attachment I, Figures 6 and 7)

The proposed security improvements at 15th and 17th Streets on Pennsylvania Avenue include relocation and replacement of the security booths, relocation of the security lines and creation of a “sally port,” and removal of sidewalk bollards. The Pennsylvania Avenue entrances are proposed to serve vehicular traffic limited to emergency vehicles, pre-screened vehicles and motorcades, and the Downtown Circulator. Therefore, the security booths will be located inside the “sally port,” and cueing requirements outside the “sally port” will be minimal. Redesigned to be architecturally appropriate, the security booths will be placed on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue and positioned so that vehicles approach the booths on the driver’s side. The existing barrier line of planters and hydraulic plate barriers will be removed and a dual barrier line consisting of a combination of removable, and retractable bollards will be installed. The existing barrier lines will be relocated outward toward the intersections, and a second, inner barrier line installed to form the “sally port.” The new outer bollard lines will be located between 30 and 40 feet from the face of the intersections to allow one car to cue and at least 10 feet of unencumbered area for pedestrians to pass.

17th Street

At 17th Street, the security line stand-off distance has been increased by 72 feet. A new outer bollard line will be located 35 feet from the intersection of 17th Street, and the existing barrier line will move east slightly to become the inner bollard line, creating a 90-foot “sally port.” The bollard lines will extend from the Renwick fence to the EEOB fence across Pennsylvania Avenue. The portion of the fence and the two western-most fence piers will be hardened to secure the area along the north side of the EEOB fence between the bollard lines on Pennsylvania Avenue and the bollard line on 17th Street, west of the EEOB. The reinforcement of this fence is achieved through the use of tension cables spanning between the two piers, which will minimize the impact upon the historic appearance of the fence. Details of hardening the pier will need to be finalized during construction when the piers can be carefully disassembled and evaluated. The proposed design modifies the existing EEOB 17th Street bollard line and its interface with the proposed Pennsylvania Avenue bollard line.

15th Street

At 15th Street, the stand-off distance has been increased by 200 feet. A new outer bollard line will be located at least 29 feet from the intersection of 15th Street, and the existing barrier line will move east to create an 80-foot “sally port.” The outer bollard line will extend from the Treasury Department fence across Pennsylvania Avenue to the corner of the Bank of America building. The inner bollard line will extend from the Treasury Department fence across Pennsylvania Avenue to the extended steps located just west of Riggs’s Bank entry.

Urban Design

The proposed design removes the numerous planter pots at the entry thresholds and maintains the curb lines and width of Pennsylvania Avenue. Multiple vehicular routes and two-way circulation is provided along all roadways to accommodate maximum flexibility for presidential or head-of-state motorcades, emergency vehicles, and the Downtown Circulator. A clear distance of at least 60 feet is maintained between the north curb line and the security booths on Pennsylvania Avenue to accommodate the Inaugural Parade and other ceremonial events, allowing the security booths to stay in place during these events.

- *Circulator.* The Downtown Circulator could traverse between 15th and 17th Street either via a direct route along the Avenue or an alternate route south on Jackson Place, east along Pennsylvania Avenue, and north on Madison Place. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figures 8 & 9*)
- *Cartway.* The Avenue and adjoining sidewalks will be re-graded to remove the crown of the existing roadway to create a gentle sloping surface. It will slope from the park (north sidewalk) up toward the White House (south sidewalk). (*Refer to Attachment I, Figures 10 & 11*)
- *Tree Planting.* All trees currently located along the length of Pennsylvania Avenue will be removed. A new planting scheme of American Elms spaced approximately 30-feet on center is proposed. The trees, when planted, will be approximately 22-feet to 24-feet tall and 6-inches to 8-inches in caliper. The proposed planting scheme consists of: (1) a single row of street trees along the north and south curbs of Pennsylvania Avenue between Jackson and Madison Places, excluding a 190-foot opening on the sidewalk in front of the White House and a 130-foot opening on the Lafayette Park sidewalk across from the White House; (2) a double row of trees along the south curb of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the EEOB and the Treasury Department; and, (3) a single row of trees along a portion of the north curb line of the Avenue west of Jackson Place and east of Madison Place. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figures 17 & 18*)
- *Paving.* The eastern and western ends of Pennsylvania Avenue will be paved with 2-foot x 5-foot granite slabs in the cartway and 4-foot x 10-foot granite slabs within the sidewalk area. The 4-foot x 10-foot granite slabs will continue along the length of the south sidewalk in front of the White House. Three warm-toned granites, having a mix of gray and pink tones, are proposed. The darkest granite color will be used in the cartway along the length of the curb to visually reinforce this edge. The pavement modules will be stacked, aligned to form continuous joints. The long side of the granite will be placed parallel to the curb line to reinforce the axis of the Avenue and to accentuate these areas as entryways to the precinct. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figures 11, 12 & 14*)

The central portion of the Avenue, in front of the White House, and the full lengths of Jackson and Madison Places will be paved with a durable, stabilized pavement with an aggregate stone finish. The pavement mix is composed of granite aggregates, the color of

which will be compatible with the color of the granite pavement but will be somewhat contrasted by warmer brown and reddish tones of the ‘fines’ used in the mix. It will be constructed to withstand the structural requirements of the various uses and accommodate pedestrian and handicap users. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figures 13*)

Site Furniture

- *Lighting.* All of the existing light fixtures along the length of Pennsylvania Avenue will be replaced with Washington D.C. twin-headed lamps designed by Henry Bacon in 1923. They will be painted light gray-green to match their original color. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figure 15*)
- *Benches.* A series of slender granite benches, of the same granite as the paving, are proposed to be placed along the southern tier of trees within the bosques in front of the EEOB and Treasury Department. No new benches are proposed on the sidewalks on the north side of the Avenue. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figure 16*)
- *Trash Receptacles.* Currently, no trash receptacles are proposed along the Avenue.
- *Booths.* The security booths at each checkpoint are proposed to be the same design, their base dimensions are approximately 9-feet by 12-feet. In all cases they will be positioned with their longer facades parallel to the cartway. The design of the booth reflects the classical architecture found along the Avenue, yet it is more modern in style because the proportion of glass to stone and metal is more contemporary, and the lines and detailing are clean and simple. The booths will have a granite base, cast iron columns painted to match the Henry Bacon light standards, and a lead coated copper roof. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figure 17*)
- *Pennsylvania Avenue Bollards.* A new bollard design is proposed for the White House on Pennsylvania Avenue at 15th and 17th Streets. The Pennsylvania Avenue bollards that cross the Avenue are 36 inches high, simple lined and have an oval cross-section with a fluted exterior similar to that of the Presidential bollard. These bollards reflect a stripped classicism style commonly found in projects of the twentieth century. The color of these bollards will match the gray-green Henry Bacon light fixtures that currently exist on the Avenue. A similar design is proposed for the retractable bollard; however it will be round in cross-section to accommodate the mechanics of their movement and to differentiate the entry to the secure space. In this location the retractable bollard will be painted light gray-green to match the color of the Pennsylvania Avenue bollard. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figure 18*)
- *Jackson and Madison Places Bollards.* The bollards that form the “sally ports” at Jackson Place and Madison Place will match the existing 42-inch high Presidential bollard in shape and color and will tie into the existing bollard lines in Lafayette Park. The same retractable bollard design as used on Pennsylvania Avenue will be used in these locations as well; however, they will be painted the same dark color as the Presidential bollard. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figure 19*)
- *Removal of Existing Bollards.* The large, pre-cast concrete bollards located along the curb

line in front of the White House, and the concrete masonry bollards at the northern terminus of Jackson and Madison Places will be removed as part of the proposed design. The thin, black steel bollards at the south terminus of Jackson Place will be removed but provisions will be made to allow them to be erected to control access during preparation of the Inaugural Parade. (*Refer to Attachment I, Figure 1*)

Other Modifications

- *Parking.* The proposed design will result in the removal of 40-angled parking spaces on Jackson Place to accommodate the revised circulation patterns associated with the proposed design. However, 14 parallel parking spaces can be accommodated on the east side of the roadway on an as needed basis.
- *Lafayette Park.* Lafayette Park will not be disturbed, except for the southern sidewalk and those locations necessary to tie into the existing bollard line at Jackson and Madison Places. The brick and granite curbs along the south sidewalk of Lafayette Park will be removed and stockpiled to re-grade and plant new trees and then will be reinstalled.

EVALUATION

The visibility, international significance, security requirements, and symbolic importance of the White House and its environs presented a significant design challenge. The proposed design addresses this challenge and a number of competing operational requirements in a thoughtful and respectful manner. The proposed security elements, paving materials and site furnishings are of a high quality design that reflects the dignity and importance of this place. The proposal enhances the historic setting and views of the White House, it reflects a clear memory of the Avenue's historic context, and it accommodates the staging of inaugural parades and the proposed Downtown Circulator transit vehicle. In addition, the proposed design is easily reversible and does not preclude the future reopening of the street to vehicular traffic, or the future construction of a tunnel under Pennsylvania Avenue.

Security Design

- *Security Operations.* The security elements have been located and designed to address the specific needs of the precinct and to complement its character. The design satisfies the physical security and operational requirements by increasing the standoff distance and improving control of vehicles entering the secure precinct in a manner that minimizes the visual impact and disruption of pedestrian movement. Relocating daily activity to Jackson and Madison Places and using Pennsylvania Avenue for official purposes will distribute vehicular circulation patterns.
- *Security Booths.* The security booths will be located to allow security officers an unobstructed view of approaching vehicles, and the "sally port" configurations will maximize the guard's control of entry into the precinct. The intent is not to historicize the booths so they appear to have been part of the precinct historically, but to integrate them into

the design so they are contextually appropriate. The proposed materials are of the highest quality and durability, imparting dignity and elegance.

The proposed design, style and materials proposed for the security booths will successfully respect and complement the formal, classical setting and scale of the Avenue and the White House and the “stripped-classicism” of other structures in the area, as well as the mix of federal style townhouses on Jackson and Madison Places. The perception of the booth’s mass is minimized by use of a hipped roof, stepping back the stone base, providing full height columns in front of the granite base, and the use of mullions to improve the scale of the windows. They will be positioned to respect the formal qualities of the buildings and site and will maintain visual openness along the Avenue and through the park. The Jackson Place security booth is located south of the plaza area of the Van Steuben Statue to minimize the impact to views across Lafayette Park from the Decatur House and the memorial plaque honoring Jacqueline Kennedy’s early 1960’s contribution to the preservation of Lafayette Park and Square.

- *Bollards.* Bollards are part of the typical palette of streetscape components established in President’s Park and are appropriately associated with the control of movement along streets, sidewalks, and the edge of a park. Although the National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan strives to reduce the reliance on bollards as the primary security element, the bollard has been chosen and is considered appropriate at this location for a number of reasons. In addition to continuity, the bollard provides free pedestrian movement, maintains a visually open environment, and respects the character of the street. In this location, the placement of new bollards is relatively limited, and is not perceived to be foreign to this landscape.

While the Presidential bollard and the proposed Pennsylvania Avenue bollard are roughly based on a classical fluted column, the existing Presidential bollard is Victorian in character and was designed and established as a security component in a park-like setting, typically edging grass. It is appropriate in an area such as Lafayette Park. The new bollard design proposed for Pennsylvania Avenue at 15th and 17th Streets is appropriate, the simple lines and flutes reflect stripped classicism and the oval shape reinforces the directionality of the Avenue and conveys a sense of formality and elegance. The Pennsylvania Avenue bollard is contemporary and its scale and light color is more appropriate to this wide avenue. It draws upon the neoclassical post on East Executive Drive next to the Treasury, relating to this authentic President’s Park feature. The four white masonry bollards at the northern terminus of both Jackson and Madison Places at H Street will be removed because they are visually intrusive and distract from the quality of the Park.

The bollard cap is being designed to accommodate a lifting noose to allow the bollard to be taken out of the ground when needed. The top of the bollard’s cap is slightly rounded with a ¼ inch cross slope. It is oval in shape with cross dimensions at the center of 6.5 inches by 10.5 inches. While the cap would not prohibit someone from hoisting themselves up and sitting, the 36 inch height and cross dimensions would make it very uncomfortable. Typical seating surfaces are 18 inches high and at least 15 inches in depth. Additionally, the locations of the bollard lines, in areas perpendicular to the direction of travel, will discourage

the act of stopping and sitting on the bollards.

The mechanics of the retractable bollard require it to have a uniform cross-section, unlike the fixed or removable bollards. To avoid incorporating too many bollard styles within the precinct, one retractable bollard design is proposed to be used in conjunction with the existing Presidential bollard and the newly proposed Pennsylvania Avenue bollard. The new retractable bollard is 36 inches high, round and fluted, and it will be painted to match the adjoining fixed bollards. The design of the retractable bollard will complement both bollard designs. Additionally, when placed adjacent to non-operable bollards, the shape of the retractable bollard allows it to be differentiated from the fixed bollards, thereby signaling the entry checkpoint for motorists.

- *Inner bollard line at 15th Street.* The inner bollard line has been located so that the bollards minimize impacts to the historical piers and align with significant fence and building columns. The bollards will be located just east of Treasury Department's fence pier and will run across Pennsylvania Avenue and the north sidewalk to align with the inside column located west of Rigg's Bank doorway, terminating at the bottom of the expanded entry stairway.
- *Outer bollard line at 17th Street.* The proposed Pennsylvania Avenue bollard line will extend across the sidewalk to the EEOB fence, modifying the existing EEOB 17th Street bollard line. This modification will improve the functional aspects of this corner and be more aesthetically appropriate. Several options to harden the exposed section of the EEOB fence, ranging from lining bollards adjacent to the fence to locating several hardened, high-back benches or a large kiosk in this area, were thoroughly evaluated. The final solution, determined to have the least impact, is to harden the two western most fence piers and to harden the fence by adding two black rails and replacing the top rail with a rail containing a tension cable. The visual impact of modifying the fence will be further minimized by the location of the trees and a way-finding kiosk.
- *"Sally Ports".* The distance between the dual bollard lines which form the "sally ports" is intended to satisfy operational requirements by minimizing interference with the entries and the functional requirements of adjacent buildings (delivery vehicles, motorcades, and emergency vehicles). Across the expanse of Pennsylvania Avenue, the distance between the barrier lines prevents the two bollard lines from visually converging and creating the perception of a wall, thereby maintaining a visually accessible and open environment.

Although the security check points allow pedestrian access and accommodate daily activities, such as truck deliveries and customer drop-off, the location of the barrier lines restricts access to some uses. During times of heightened security, temporary pedestrian barriers may be placed to control access at various points along the Avenue and in Lafayette Park. The United States Secret Service has agreed to place any temporary pedestrian barriers either at or in alignment with the inner bollard line to minimize restrictions to pedestrian access. The will also resolve necessary logistics with the adjacent users to maintain pedestrian and delivery access.

Due to the USSS operational requirements to channel vehicles through the primary access points at Jackson and Madison Places, the inner bollard lines at these locations have been modified. The inner bollard line is contained within a small portion of the street rather than crossing the full-width of the street and approaching the historic townhouses. This improves security operations and reduces impact to pedestrian circulation, historic resources and visual quality. Although the “sally port” creates two rows of bollards twelve feet apart, the visual impact is minimized by the narrow street width, the existing streetscape, and the relatively short length of the bollard lines. In addition, the surface of the expanded sidewalks will be designed to visually blend with the street, while providing additional pedestrian circulation space. Mountable curbs will be installed on the southern curb line to accommodate loading access to adjacent properties.

Circulation

The proposed design creates a pedestrian precinct, accommodating the important functions that occur within the area and securing it for the protection of the President and the President’s family and staff.

- *Reversibility.* The plan is simple and flexible and can be easily retrofitted to accommodate a vehicular thoroughfare, or modified to accommodate a higher intensity of programmed people oriented space, as may be deemed appropriate in the future. If and when the security threat changes or technologies improve to remove vehicular restrictions, only the security booths and bollards would need to be removed. All landscape planting and streetscape elements are located outside of the 84-foot right-of-way; therefore, these features would not be disturbed or negatively impacted by any change in roadway use.
- *Emergency Access.* Emergency access is accommodated at each of the four security checkpoints.
- *Pedestrian Activity.* Pedestrian access is significantly improved by removing the bollards from the sidewalk in front of the White House, and removing the numerous planter pots and small trees from the cartway. The area in front of the White House is flexible and will accommodate formal and informal public gatherings. While the entire Avenue can accommodate free movement of pedestrians, the openness of the area in front of the White House, between Jackson and Madison Places, creates a grand and dignified memorial place to view the office and home of the President, and conduct appropriate public activities.
- *Vehicle Cueing.* H Street is a one-way eastbound roadway, and ample cueing areas are provided on Jackson and Madison Places. At each of these locations, up to five cars or two, 45-foot trucks, can be accommodated before entering the “sally port,” and an additional two cars or one mid-size (40-foot) truck can be processed within the “sally port” simultaneously.

On Pennsylvania Avenue the barrier lines are being relocated outward toward the 15th Street and 17th Street intersections. Room to allow one car to cue and room for pedestrians to pass

has been provided, allowing 10 feet clear pedestrian passage at 15th Street, and 20 feet at 17th Street.

- *Downtown Circulator.* Multiple routes for the proposed Downtown Circulator are accommodated without detracting from the pedestrian character of the Avenue. The Circulator could traverse the Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets, either via a direct route along Pennsylvania Avenue, or an alternative route south on Jackson Place, east along Pennsylvania Avenue, and north on Madison Place. The Circulator, a supplement to the downtown transit system, is an important component to re-establish limited cross town connectivity.
- *Ceremonial Events.* The proposed design accommodates the Inaugural Parade and other ceremonial events. A minimum clear distance of 60 feet is provided between the overhang of the security booths and the north curb line to accommodate the Parade. This distance allows the security booths to stay in place during preparation for and during these special events. The proposed placement of trees will allow construction of the viewing stands along the Avenue as well. The placement of the booths on Jackson and Madison Places will allow the necessary access requirements for staging and emergency access. However, the addition of the “sally port” on Madison Place will cause a loss of approximately 50 feet of media staging area for the Parade.
- *Official Use.* The official functions of the White House and Blair House are accommodated. Two-way circulation will be allowed through each of the four security checkpoints to allow multiple routes in and out of the precinct for Presidential and Head of State motorcades. Additionally, ample unencumbered cueing area and parking for motorcades can be accommodated on Pennsylvania Avenue during special events.
- *Deliveries.* The loading and delivery functions of the adjacent uses are accommodated either within the “sally ports” or along the curb within the secured area. The “sally ports” can accommodate the screening of delivery trucks before they proceed to their destination. Operational procedures will need to be established to accommodate special deliveries by trucks greater than 40 feet in length.
- *Parking.* While removal of the 40-angled parking spaces on Jackson Place is necessary to accommodate adequate circulation and loading functions, 14 parallel spaces can be accommodated on an as needed basis.

Pedestrian Experience and Visual Quality

The design uses paving materials, tree planting, and street furniture to enhance the pedestrian experience of this space. The design employs familiar materials and mediates between the European formality of the L’Enfant Plan, the naturalism of Downing’s Lafayette Park and the open setting of the White House grounds. It maintains consistency with the grace of Lafayette Park and the White House, and respects the open character of the Avenue and historic L’Enfant views of the White House, reinforcing the White House as the focus of President’s Park. While

the Avenue will not appear as an open street for automobiles, the views that signify the importance and significance of the place will be maintained.

- *Granite Paving.* Large, rectangular granite pavers are proposed at the entry portals on Pennsylvania Avenue near 15th and 17th Streets. The pavers will reflect the grand scale and urbanity of the adjacent buildings and accentuate the entryways to the special precinct. The use of large granite pavers for the 33-foot-wide sidewalk in front of the White House provides continuity along the Avenue and creates a dignified and elegant edge to the existing fence and front lawn of the White House. Three colors of granite will be intermixed along the sidewalks and within the entry thresholds: Kershaw is the lightest tone; Deer Isle is a medium tone; and Deer Brown is the darkest tone. The Deer Brown will be used as the gutter material and Kershaw or Deer Isle as the curb material to delineate the 6-inch elevation change. Although all three colors are used adjacent to each building or fence wall, the ratio of the lighter and darker granite will change depending on the color and tone of the adjacent structures. **A sample of the Deer Brown granite was recently submitted and has not received adequate review to form a recommendation. Therefore, the proposed granite should not be approved at this time.**
- *Aggregate Paving.* The heart of the space is reinforced through the use of a perceptually softer, more natural paving material. The central portion of Pennsylvania Avenue, and the full lengths of Jackson and Madison Places are spatially connected through the use of a durable, stabilized, aggregate pavement, strengthening its historical relationship to President's Park. This pavement material encourages the pedestrian to slow down, stroll, and reflect on the significance of the place. The granite aggregate mix is being selected for its color value (the degree of the lightness or darkness of color) to complement the granite slab pavement and for its greater saturation of reds and browns to complement the brick material on the site. **The applicant is still working to refine the aggregate composition to obtain the desired color and surface appearance, and to ensure that it complements the granite and brick. The final pavement sample must be reviewed by the Commission prior to its approval.**
- *Jackson Place and Madison Place Expanded Sidewalk Paving.* To minimize adverse affects on the historic character of the street, treatment of the expanded sidewalks that will form the "sally ports" on Jackson Place and Madison Place will be important. To retain the visual continuity of the street to the extent possible, the existing granite curb should be retained, and the new extended curb should be of the same color and quality of granite. The surface paving should also be a high quality material, similar in color and tone to the proposed aggregate paving. **This paving material must be reviewed by the Commission prior to its approval.**
- *Trees.* The American Elm is proposed for the Avenue tree, it has a beautiful upright and spreading form and proven successful in urban conditions. It is reasonably fast growing and long-lived provided it is well maintained. The National Park Service has an excellent maintenance program and success record with the American Elm, losing only 1 percent in the D.C. region to disease. Additionally, the proposed source for the elms is from a nursery that has grown them from cuttings, an ideal condition for their long term survivability. It

will also be desirable to have a uniform look along the Avenue throughout the seasons. Several other tree species were considered, but ruled out for various reasons.

The location and spacing of the trees has been refined to frame entries and respect views to the White House and through the park. The proposed tree planting scheme is important to the overall success of the design. The bosque of trees on the south side of the cartway that forms an allee will de-emphasize the imposition of the security elements at the entry thresholds, improve the pedestrian scale, and create a sense of entry. The planting of street trees on both the north and south side of the cartway strengthens the memory of the street, reinforces the visual axis along the length of the Avenue, and provides a transition to the heart of the space. The absence of trees in front of the White House will emphasize the expansive open area, and differentiate and signify the importance of the place, as well as frame the historic vista from 16th Street that was established in the L'Enfant Plan, emphasizing the sightlines toward the White House and its grounds.

The tree planting on the north side of the Avenue does not include trees in front of Riggs Bank and the Renwick Gallery because the combination of the security lines, underground utilities and building entry locations prevents the ability to appropriately locate or space the trees, causing them to seem disconnected from the overall planting scheme and compromising the design. Moreover, these two buildings are architecturally distinguished from the other buildings on the north side of the Avenue and they frame the visual terminus of the adjoining diagonal Avenues, giving them the role of articulating the corners as special urban landmarks, where the city meets the precinct of the White House.

Preservation of the Historic Character and Integrity of President's Park

The concept design retains the width and the curbs of the Pennsylvania Avenue cartway, and therefore the integrity of the dimensions of the historic street, which has been designated as part of the historic street plan of Washington, DC (known as the L'Enfant Plan). This two-block length of Pennsylvania Avenue did not exist on paper in L'Enfant's Plan, but it existed informally in physical fact beginning in the first years of the occupation of the White House and the street was formally named in 1824.

Pennsylvania Avenue in the two blocks in front of the White House has existed at its current width (or very close to it) since the formal adoption of the street in that year. In addition, the boundaries of Lafayette Park were also established in 1824, the year that the Marquis de Lafayette first visited Washington and addressed the public from the square. The square was fenced in the 1850s and the original fence line was confirmed in 1999 when the fence footings were uncovered. Similarly, the boundary of the north lawn of the White House has been established since 1820 when the White House fence was installed (the current fence is a replica of the original fence).

The reintroduction of the street trees on the south sidewalk of Pennsylvania Avenue is a welcome reinforcement to the character of the Avenue as a city street. While the installation of security barriers in the cartway will undoubtedly change the character of the street right-of-way,

the proposal to install the street trees and the Bacon light standard underscores the Commission's charge to the designer to retain the character—the memory—of the street while adapting it for new purposes and to ensure that the two-block length remains physically, visually, and symbolically linked to the rest of the city's street plan. The tree lines, including the double segments in front of the EEOB and the Treasury that create an allee, strengthen the east-west axis of the Avenue, counterbalancing the installation of the bollard lines across the width of the Avenue, and their absence in front of the White House strengthens the north-south axis through the site. The allee and the benches reinforce the pedestrian use and qualities of the sidewalk, thereby reinforcing its distinction from the cartway.

The proposed bollard design is very appropriate for use across the width of Pennsylvania Avenue and its sidewalks. It has been designed and scaled for an urban, paved space, as opposed to bollards that are designed to edge parkland or run parallel to sidewalks and curbs. This bollard will become a visual feature of the Avenue and must be commensurate in character, scale, style, color, and dimension with the importance of this public space and the design vocabulary of the Avenue. At the same time, it must become part of the ensemble of street furniture on the Avenue, which must be subordinate to the buildings and views. The bollard design succeeds in both of these requirements and ameliorates their necessary presence.

The security booth design reflects the urban character of the Avenue and is derived from the White House fence piers and other neoclassical vocabulary along the Avenue. The roofs of the security booths will be the only security elements visible from more than the immediately adjacent blocks of Pennsylvania and New York Avenues. The security booth roofs will be seen against the trees of the White House north lawn and the proposed new street trees.

None of the paving materials in the rights-of-way is historic (all date from no earlier than the 1970s), although brick has been used in some of the sidewalks in some periods during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Paving materials in both the cartway and sidewalks have changed over time; granite has been used for the White House sidewalk since 1975.

Jackson and Madison Places have been previously altered for security purposes by the installation of the Northside Barrier project. The design introduces an additional bollard line that will detract from the visual relationship between the historic buildings and the streets and park. However, the historic width of the streets and the sidewalks is retained, so that the buildings will continue to address the public space as they have for almost two hundred years. Further, the existing bollard line will be simplified and better integrated with the design and placement of the new security booths. The removal of the four white masonry bollards at the intersections of Jackson and Madison with H Streets will significantly improve the views into the site, as they are the most visible security features from the northern perimeter of Lafayette Park as well as from the Connecticut and Vermont Avenue vistas.

Construction

Construction will begin in January 2004 and is scheduled to be complete in October 2004, in time to commence preparation for the Inaugural Parade. A construction fence, a minimum of six-feet in height with a wind screen, will be installed around the project's limit of work. This will

cause the Avenue to be closed to the visiting public for approximately one year, and the front of the White House will not be visible for approximately 10 months. **For the benefit of residents and visitors to this area, staff recommends that public information about the improvement project should be posted on-site to inform the public about the project, convey information about the ultimate design, and provide tourists with an image and photo opportunity of the proposed improvements.**

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION

- On June 5, 2003, the Commission approved the preliminary site and building plans submitted by the Federal Highway Administration for the security and landscape project for Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, and Jackson and Madison Places.
- On March 12, 2003, the Commission adopted the concept design plans for the security and landscape project for Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, and Jackson and Madison Places.
- On January 9, 2003, the Commission adopted plans to install Presidential bollards along the curb line of 17th Street on the west side of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The bollards will extend from 17th Street and State Place on the south to 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue on the north. At the time the Commission approved the proposal, it was approved “with the understanding that the placement and locations of bollards at the intersection of 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue will be modified in the future to be compatible with the plan for security improvements along the section of Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets.”
- On October 2, 2002, the Commission adopted the *National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan* that included the selection of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates as the design firm to design the civic improvements and security measures for Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.
- On November 2, 2001, the Commission adopted the recommendations of the Interagency Security Task Force and released the report “Designing for Security in the Nation’s Capital.” The report acknowledged that as a result of the terrorist threats since the early 1990s, Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House should be closed to regular vehicular traffic until such time as detection technology improved, or the security threat changed. It also called for immediate action to beautify and improve the condition of this important civic space. It also set forth a number of programmatic criteria necessary to mitigate the impact of its closure.
- On July 9, 1998, the Commission approved final site and building plans for the Northside Barrier Replacement around Lafayette Park and Jackson and Madison Places, NW. On April 2, 1998, the Commission commented on the Environmental Assessment for the Northside Barrier Replacement project.

- On June 19, 1997, the Commission commented on the Environmental Assessment for the implementation of White House Security Recommendations on Vehicular Traffic Restrictions submitted by the Department of the Treasury. The Department of Treasury subsequently issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and concluded its environmental review of traffic restrictions in the vicinity of the White House.
- On June 27, 1996, the Commission tabled the Alternative Design concepts for Street Improvements along Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, between 15th and 17th Streets until such time as a NEPA document addressing traffic, economic impacts, and historic preservation was prepared by the U.S. Department of Treasury and forwarded by the NPS to the Commission.

RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION

In conjunction with approval of the preliminary site and building plans for the Pennsylvania Avenue Security and Landscape Project, the Commission requested that the preliminary design be further developed to respect the need for security and the need to achieve the highest urban design quality. The issues raised in the Commission Action of June 5, and the design responses to each area are as follows:

- (1) Refine the paving pattern to ensure the colors of the granite sidewalk complements the adjacent buildings, fence walls and piers along the Avenue and clearly defines the curb's edge, ramps and crosswalks locations. Ensure that the color of the aggregate paving complements the granite selection while reinforcing the relationship of the street to the open lawn of the White House grounds and Lafayette Park.
 - The Federal Highway Administration and design team are continuing to refine the aggregate mix to obtain the desired surface appearance and texture. Although three colors of granite have been chosen (Kershaw is the lightest tone; Deer Isle is a medium tone; and Deer Brown is the darkest tone), samples of the Deer Brown have not yet been submitted for review. FHWA has indicated that the Deer Brown is proposed for the gutter and the Kershaw and Deer Isle as the curb material to delineate the elevation change at the curb. In addition, all three colors are used adjacent to each building or fence wall; however, the ratio of the lighter and darker granite will change depending on the color and tone of the adjacent structures. The final pavement samples will require final review by the Commission at a future date.
 - The aggregate paving material is in the final stages of refinement. While the proposed materials appear very appropriate for this space, final approval of the pavement design should be withheld pending submission of a sample for the final pavement design.
- (2) Refine the cap design of the new fixed and removable bollards on Pennsylvania Avenue to discourage improper use, such as sitting or standing.

- A comfortable seat is typically 18 inches high and at least 15 inch in depth. The top of the bollard's cap is slightly rounded with a ¼ inch cross slope. It is oval in shape, with cross dimensions at the center of 6.5 inches by 10.5 inches. While the cap would not prohibit someone from hoisting themselves up and straddling the top of the bollard, the height and dimensions would make it very uncomfortable.
- (3) Refine the security booth to ensure the proper proportion of its granite base, columns, and roof to reduce the perceived mass of the structure, as well as the booth's impact on views approaching the Avenue and through Lafayette Park. Additionally, ensure that the roof does not encroach into the travel route of the parade.
- The security booths have been located and the design refined to satisfy security operational requirements and the access requirements for the Inaugural Parade, and to minimize the impact on views approaching the Avenue and through Lafayette Park. Additionally, the design of the booth has been refined so its components are well proportioned and scaled appropriately to its locations.
- (4) Remove the four white masonry bollards at the terminus of Jackson and Madison Places at H Street.
- The four white masonry bollards will be removed.
- (5) Amend the inner barrier line at 15th Street to extend the bollards across the sidewalk to the bottom of the steps, aligned with the column located west of Riggs' Bank entry, eliminating the benches as part of the security barrier.
- The inner bollard line has been amended across the north sidewalk of Pennsylvania Avenue to align with the inside column located west of Rigg's Bank doorway and terminate at the bottom of the expanded entry stairway.
- (6) Refine how the area between the outer security line on Pennsylvania Avenue at 17th Street and the proposed location of the modified bollard line on 17th Street, along the Eisenhower Executive Office Building (EEOB) fence is hardened.
- The portion of the existing fence and the two western-most fence piers will be hardened to secure the area along the north side of the EEOB fence between the bollard lines on Pennsylvania Avenue and the bollard line on 17th Street, west of the EEOB. The fence will be hardened by adding two black rails and replacing the top rail with a rail containing a tension cable. The visual impact of modifying the fence will be minimized by the location of the trees and way-finding kiosk located between the inner pier and the bollard line.
- (7) Amend the tree planting scheme to remove the three trees in front of Riggs Bank and the two trees in front of the Renwick Gallery; and refine the spacing of the street trees and the placement of benches in relation to the built features along the Avenue.

- These trees have been removed.

CONSULTATION

Multiple entities have been consulted throughout the planning and design development process for Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. The primary efforts are listed in the order to most recent activity.

- *NEPA and Section 106 Consultation Meetings.*

The Federal Highway Administration, in cooperation with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office, the District of Columbia Department of Transportation, the National Park Service, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation finalized the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on September 3, 2003. The MOA indicates the terms of the conclusion of the Section 106 consultation, which included individuals and planning and historic preservation organizations, as well as area stakeholders. *On July 24, 2003*, the Federal Highway Administration held a consultation meeting in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for adjacent property owners, stakeholders, and the public to comment on the design proposal and the draft Memorandum of Agreement.

On May 29, the Federal Highway Administration issued a Finding of No Significant Impact for the proposed improvements to Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House and Jackson and Madison Places. *On May 30, 2003*, NCPC staff concluded that the analysis was sufficient and demonstrated no significant environmental impacts from the planned action and its final design and issued a Finding of No Significant Impact based on the EA.

On April 26, 2003, the Federal Highway Administration initiated a 30-day public comment period on the environmental assessment in conjunction with the NEPA process. *On May 5, 2003*, the Federal Highway Administration, in conjunction with NCPC, held a NEPA and Section 106 public meeting to solicit input on the concept design and receive public comment, and *on May 19, 2003*, a public consultation meeting was held to review and discuss the project and any potential effects on historic resources. The 30-day comment period closed on *May 25, 2003*.

On February 25, 2003, the Federal Highway Administration, in conjunction with NCPC, held a public consultation meeting to review and discuss the project and any potential effects on historic resources.

On January 15, 2003, the Federal Highway Administration, in conjunction with NCPC, held the initial NEPA and Section 106 public open house. The purpose of this meeting was to solicit additional input from the public regarding design considerations for Pennsylvania Avenue.

- *Verification Study.* Between October 2002 and January 2003, Michael Van Valkenburgh

Associates conducted a verification study that involved meeting with key stakeholders to determine the detailed operational and functional requirements for the project. The designer also met with a group of noted historians and architects to obtain input regarding historic resources and urban design.

- *Public Comment on Initial Design Idea.* On September 4, 2002, the NCPC accepted public comment on the National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan (NCUDSP) that included Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates' design idea. On July 11, 2002, the NCPC released the NCUDSP and design idea for a 45-day public comment period.
- *Design Approach Idea Generation.* In February 2002, as part of the NCUDSP, four landscape architects were asked to submit ideas on how to improve the Avenue in an effort to generate design idea approaches. Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates was chosen as the designer to proceed with the design effort.
- *Reconsideration and review of previous design proposals.* Between March 2001 and September 2001, the Interagency Security Task Force consulted with security, urban design, transportation and historic preservation experts to evaluate and debate the appropriateness of the Avenue's closure. The Security Task Force reached the difficult conclusion that Pennsylvania Avenue should remain closed until the security threat ended. This consensus decision by all Task Force members and key stakeholders, including the U.S. Secret Service, the National Park Service, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Federal City Council, and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, was reached only after considerable debate and agreement on a number of programmatic requirements.

As part of this evaluation, the Security Task Force conducted a thorough review and deliberation of all previous design proposals prepared for the Avenue. Among design proposals generated over a 40-year period, the reviews also included the National Park Service's Comprehensive Design Plan for President's Park, and the design process used by the National Park Service in 1995 and 1996 for the Avenue. Both of these efforts included extensive input from both national experts and the general public.

Commission of Fine Arts

The Commission of Fine Arts reviewed the preliminary concept plans for this project at their March 2003 meeting, reviewed paving materials along with bollard and guard booth details on site in May 2003, and reviewed the most recent design at their meeting on June 19, 2003. At the June meeting the Commission of Fine Arts approved the design plans for this project, and requested that final material selections be submitted for review when they are identified. These final materials include the final granite selections, the asphalt pavement, and the paving material for the expanded sidewalk areas on Jackson and Madison Places.

Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House and President's Park

The National Park Service, in cooperation with many agencies and entities, including the Commission, developed the Comprehensive Design Plan (CDP) for the White House and

President's Park. Approved by the Commission in May 2000, the CDP addresses the physical and functional needs of the White House, the Executive Office of the President, and the President and his family for the next twenty years. Incorporated in the proposed solutions are measures to improve the historic and visual character of President's Park. The CDP addresses resource conservation and protection, White House support services, visitor services, special events, transportation and parking, and site management and operations. The CDP did not address the future plans for Pennsylvania Avenue itself, but did provide for security barriers along H Street at the north of the site; the Northside Barrier project was implemented before the adoption of the CDP.

The CDP recommended the removal of parking on Jackson Place, as well as surface parking throughout the Park, to improve its appearance, function, and security. In the context of the current proposal, the removal of parking spaces and vehicles would allow for adequate area for traffic flow, and loading and deliveries. The CDP calls for the provision of 1,140 parking spaces in several locations below grade within President's Park.

Conformance with the Comprehensive Plan

There are two elements of the National Capital Planning Commission's Comprehensive Plan that most directly apply to the Pennsylvania Avenue Security and Landscape Design Project. These are the Parks, Open Space and Natural Features Element and the Preservation and Historic Features Element. The proposed concept design is consistent with the goals and policies in both elements.

The concept design has met the project's objectives of satisfying both security and circulation requirements and of beautifying and improving the quality of the public space. This has been achieved while acknowledging the historic character and integrity of the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans. The proposed landscape components enhance the public buildings and civic space, and provide a flexible space for public use and gatherings. The security features have been located, to the degree possible, to minimize the impacts to the historic character of the setting.

The Comprehensive Plan encourages that cultural and open space resources--the legacy of the L'Enfant Plan and the McMillan Plans--be conserved through protection and enhancement, and also serve as places for documenting our natural heritage. President's Park, including Lafayette Park, qualifies as a Monumental and Decorative Park, a Designed Landscape, and as a Historic Park in the Parks and Open Space System.

The following policies in the Parks, Open Space and Natural Features Element guide the development and protection of these resources:

- The great cross-axes of the Mall Complex, from the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial and from the White House to the Jefferson Memorial, create a unique national space—they are a summary of democratic ideals and achievements that must be protected from inappropriate development. The Mall should be considered complete, and any improvements necessary in this area should be limited in scope and sensitively designed to reinforce the integrity of the

Mall Complex.

- The Mall Complex should primarily serve as a formal setting for the Capitol, the White House, the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, and the Tidal Basin and should be maintained as a large landscaped, open, and ecologically significant area. It should also serve as a heritage education center and meet the passive/leisure and active recreational needs of visitors and residents, to the extent that its primary purpose is not compromised.
- Monumental Parks and Designed Landscapes should serve as settings to enhance public buildings, monuments, and memorials; as such, their fundamental integrity should be protected. They should also serve as outdoor areas for displays and cultural activities, as well as areas for passive and controlled active recreational activities, including lunchtime picnics and gatherings.
- The historic urban design framework of the Nation's Capital established by the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans for open space, long axes, and dramatic vistas must be protected.
- Designed landscape parks (squares, circles, and triangles) associated with the L'Enfant City should be restored, where necessary, protected, and enhanced generally as green landscaped areas providing an oasis for pedestrians and settings for monuments, memorials, and civic art.
- Historic parks should be established and preserved as important legacies of national historic, architectural, and landscape significance. Special efforts should be taken to provide for the interpretation of their history. Historic parks should be properly maintained to provide for the controlled use that respects their historical integrity. Ancillary uses, such as access, visitor, and multi-purpose activities, should not detract from the historical value of these sites.

The Preservation and Historic Features element of the Comprehensive Plan provides further guidance. The goal and objectives include:

- Preserving and enhancing the urban spaces, circles, squares, and plazas generated by the L'Enfant Plan and McMillan Plan and the unique views and vistas of the National Capital;
- Promoting continuity in the planning of the historic design framework of the National Capital as generated by the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans, and protecting their important intangible, as well as tangible qualities such as the setting, system of streets and intended character of development.
- Preserving the important Historic Features of the District while permitting new development that is compatible with those features.
- Increasing awareness of, and access to, facilities, places, and activities essential to residents and visitors.

The Federal and District governments should cooperatively:

- Provide leadership in the protection and enhancement of the important Historic Resources of the National Capital.
- Establish and sustain exemplary standards of property stewardship, design, and maintenance for all Historic property under their ownership or control.
- Ensure that records relating to the construction, alteration, and demolition of Historic Properties or potential Historic properties are retained for future use and reference.
- Ensure that actions that affect Historic Properties are reviewed for historic preservation impacts.
- Every effort should be made to provide for the continued, appropriate use of all Historic properties. If the original use or a reasonable intensification of the original use is no longer feasible, appropriate adaptive use should be encouraged.
- The distinguishing qualities or character of Historic Landscapes should be protected and enhanced.
- Within Historic Districts, and particularly within the L'Enfant City, original street patterns should be preserved by maintaining public rights-of-way.
- The distinguishing original quality or character of historic properties should be protected. The removal or alteration of any historically valuable material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible and kept to a minimum when required for continued use.
- New construction on Historic Landmarks or in Historic Districts should be compatible with the historical architectural character and cultural heritage of the landmark or district. In design, height, proportion, mass, configuration, building materials, texture, color, and location, new construction should complement these valuable features of the landmark or district, particularly features in the immediate vicinity to which the new construction will be visually related.

Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee reviewed this item at its meeting on August 13, 2003, and forwarded the proposal to the Commission with the statement that the project has been coordinated with all agencies participating. The participating agencies were NCPC; the District of Columbia Office of Planning; Fire Department; the Department of Housing and Community Development; the District of Columbia Department of Transportation; the General Services Administration; the National Park Service; and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

National Historic Preservation Act

FHWA served as the lead agency for conducting the Section 106 review for this undertaking, in partnership with NCPC. Consultation occurred in several phases since the Task Force began its work in March 2001, first with federal and District of Columbia agency members of the Task Force, along with advising agencies and invited technical experts. Information derived from NPS's public and agency outreach effort during the development of the National Park Service's Comprehensive Design Plan for President's Park about the future use and appearance of both the Park and the Avenue was taken into consideration, as well. In addition, NCPC staff made presentations to professional groups locally and nationally and solicited responses to the Task Force's work. The Task Force released its report in November 2001, followed by a comment period. The second phase of the collective inquiry culminated in the July 2002 draft National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan, which was followed by a 45-day comment period. In addition, the Commission heard public testimony at its July 11, 2002 commission meeting.

In the *National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan*, an initial scheme for design and security modifications to Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House was presented. Throughout Fall 2002, NCPC, FHWA, and the designer met with stakeholder agencies and adjacent property owners having functional and technical operations in President's Park. As a result of the many operational requirements of the area, and following further site investigation and design development, the preliminary site and building plans were developed.

The initial NEPA and Section 106 Scoping Meeting was held on January 15, 2003 to brief the public on the project, the initial concept idea, and the review process and timeline. Subsequent Section 106 public consultation meetings were held on February 25, May 19, and July 24, 2003. An additional meeting on May 5, 2003 allowed the public to comment on both NEPA and historic preservation matters during the EA comment period. Individual and smaller consultation meetings occurred throughout this period.

Consulting parties included the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO), the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the Executive Office of the President, The Committee of 100 on the Federal City, the National Coalition to Save Our Mall, the Smithsonian Institution's Renwick Gallery, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Decatur House, the D.C. Society of Professional Engineers, and the U.S. Secret Service.

FHWA's determination, in consultation with the DC SHPO and other agencies and parties, is that that project will have an adverse effect on some of the historic resources in the area, given the installation of bollards and security booths in the rights-of-way and the resulting change to the character of the open space and some vistas. Other effects will result from the specific placement of the bollard lines, benches, or trees close to building facades or historic fences or railings, as well as from alterations to the site through the change and differentiation of materials.

FHWA has minimized adverse effects through the retention of the cartway and sidewalk widths and sections. It has minimized the adverse effects through the customized design of bollards and gate houses for the Avenue, the restoration of the original street trees in front of the White

House, the removal of the masonry bollards along Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, as well as those on Jackson and Madison Places at H Street, and the addition of an alley of trees and benches on portions of the south side of the Avenue sidewalk in order to underscore the pedestrian character of the sidewalk as distinct from the street cartway.

A signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among the FHWA, the DC SHPO, DDOT, and the ACHP indicates the terms of the conclusion of the Section 106 consultation, which included individuals and planning and historic preservation organizations, as well as area stakeholders. The Section 106 review period will continue through September 2003 to allow the FHWA to consider any additional views of speakers as well as Commissioners at the September 4 meeting of the Commission, and any subsequent written comments from interested parties. The MOA includes a provision for a vibration monitoring plan, for historic properties located adjacent to the construction area, to be developed and implemented by the FHWA. The MOA notes the avoidance and minimization of adverse effects where they have been possible. It also notes the current closed condition of the Avenue and confirms that the proposal is reversible should conditions change.

Historical significance of the setting:

Pennsylvania Avenue at the White House is one of the most historic and symbolically sensitive places in the nation. The White House at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue lies within President's Park, a special precinct of the Nation's Capital. Generous public spaces and views, historic buildings and landscapes, and associations to historical events and people characterize this precinct and tell its history. These settings, buildings, and associations have great significance for the American people.

The landscape design of Lafayette Park by Andrew Jackson Downing, the noted horticulturist and landscape designer, was implemented in the mid-19th century and is still largely intact. Most of the 19th-century buildings along Madison and Jackson Places facing Lafayette Park are now executive branch offices, although they were originally private dwellings. Similarly, the buildings on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, such as the Smithsonian Institution's Renwick Gallery, Blair House, and Riggs Bank, reflect earlier private development near the White House. Lafayette Park is the centerpiece of the Lafayette Square Historic District, designated a National Historic Landmark in 1970. The historic district contains approximately thirty buildings, including the Eisenhower Executive Office Building and the Treasury Building flanking the White House. Most of the buildings in the Lafayette Square Historic District are also individually designated in the National Register of Historic Places. The 15th Street Financial Historic District and the Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site are other historic districts that illustrate the area's significance.

As in other parts of Washington, and particularly in President's Park, open space—including the street rights-of-way and parkland—is as significant to the historic setting and as worthy of protection as the buildings. The views and vistas along Pennsylvania Avenue, as well as to and from the avenues radiating from the White House, are significant. The avenues provide vantage points from which to view the White House and nearby buildings, and they also comprise an important aspect of the setting of the White House.

National Environmental Policy Act

NCPC staff analyzed, in conformance with the requirements of NEPA, the prepared Environmental Assessment (EA) completed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in April 2003. The Commission staff participated in the development of that document, acting with delegated authority in that effort, as a cooperating agency. Staff prepared and completed, on May 30, 2003, a Finding of No Significant Impact based on the EA, concluding that the analysis was sufficient and demonstrated no significant environmental impacts from the planned action and its final design.